

What Should I Do if I Suspect Publication Misconduct?

The Committee on Ethics sometimes receives emails from individuals expressing concerns about research misconduct in an ACS publication. Under the Bylaws of the ACS, the ACS ETHX Committee does not serve an adjudicatory role in the Society. So, where should you go to express your concerns?

First, before I answer your question, I want to thank you for speaking up and reaching out. It is everyone's responsibility to maintain the integrity of our global chemical research record. So, whether you are a student, a faculty member, industrial researcher, author, or reviewer, thank you for doing your part.

When reporting your concerns, it is always more effective to start locally. If you are a coauthor and have concerns about work that is or has been published from your institution, it is best to contact the Research Integrity Officer (RIO) if you are at an academic institution or your Compliance Officer if you are working at a company. If you are a reader or reviewer and have concerns about work that you read in an ACS publication, you should contact the editor of the journal directly. Contact information for the editor appears on the journal masthead. ACS Publications has established protocols for addressing potential misconduct in ACS journals. Be prepared to provide any direct evidence you have concerning your allegation. The author(s) will probably be contacted, as well as their employer or institution, in an effort to investigate your concerns.

If you have general questions regarding publication ethics, start by reviewing the information on the ACS Publications webpage at URL: https://publish.acs.org/publish/publication_ethics. Their email address is pubethics@acs.org.